Mark Grozen-Smith

AAAS 182

Final Project Proposal

The reason I am taking this class is because I want to learn more about music. Not just the history of music, not just the theory behind it, not just the stories of today’s artists, but rather all of that. Music is a very cultural, spiritual, and complex entity in society, and in order to understand it, one has to explore the influential factors responsible for creating it. This class delves into the growth of a couple major genres of music starting from the roots almost one hundred years ago. This has allowed us to really learn a large amount of the substance that has come together to affect what we hear today. The knowledge I have gained through lectures and particularly through in-depth discussions and investigations in section has enabled me to critically analyze the music I hear today. I am no longer restricted to just the notes, rhythms, progressions, and instruments present as I can now incorporate the entire bloodline of the music all the way back to the jump-blues or jazz. This is why I took the class, so I think it makes the most sense to approach my final project with the same perspective.

For this project, I would like to create a song that is an amalgam of love songs from the beginning of our studies to the present day. Creating a mixture of songs from the early gospel era, to blues, to Motown, to early pop, and finally ending with modern R&B will bring together a lot of interesting concepts. In order to write this song, my group will need to research the meanings behind a lot of songs, how the songs were written, what the songs meant in their historical context, and how they can play off of each other. This will indirectly also become a study of the evolution of love, sexuality, and gender over the century since any love song includes the singer and society’s perspective on gender equality and reverence as well as what it means to love someone.

The reason we have decided to pursue a project is rooted in the idea that we are dealing with music here. I could write a 50-page paper about a song describing every note, every movement, every instrument, and every lyric, but after reading that, would the reader have heard the song? No. The reader would know a lot, but have experienced nothing. This is the same reason Professor Monson has played so many songs and videos in class. The feeling of a song can only be approximately described. The performance will allow us to display the interplay between genres and generations as we blend the styles even mixing parts around to show connections between seemingly unrelated progressions or messages.

In order to create this cross-generation, cross-genre combination of songs, we will each have to deeply research the important time periods and love songs associated with those periods in music. Diving into each period’s major works as well as the meanings behind those and their relationship with the other relevant songs will be very important to producing an educational performance.

We have decided we would be happy to perform this medley for the class. This type of interpretation of the material we learned this semester would very effectively summarize major points. Looking at the semester with our now learned perspectives will open our eyes to many things we have missed along the way as well as to aspects of new music as well.

**Members –** TFs:

**Mark Grozen-Smith** - Warrick Moses

**Brad Latilla-Campbell** - Scott Poulson Bryant

**Eli Rivas** - Warrick Moses

**Mandi Nyambi** - Sarah Politz

**George Baxter** - Scott Poulson-Bryant

**Kyra Weeks** - Charrise Barrron

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